



Date: 11-21-21 Christ the King Sunday

Greeting and Sharing our Joys and Concerns, Announcements

Prelude: Prelude on "Netherlands" Beatrice Hatton Fisk

Lighting of the Candles: **Please enjoy a moment of silence and inner reflection as we quietly prepare ourselves for worship**

***Opening Hymn Come, Ye Thankful People Come**

UMH No. 694

1. Come, ye thankful people come, raise the song of harvest home; all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin. God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied; come to God's own temple come, raise the song of harvest home.
2. All the world is God's own field, fruit as praise to God we yield; wheat and tares together sown are to joy or sorrow grown; first the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear; Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be.
3. For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take the harvest home; from the field shall in that day all offenses purge away, giving angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast; but the fruitful ears to store in the garner evermore.
4. Even so, Lord, quickly come, bring thy final harvest home; gather thou thy people in, free from sorrow, free from sin, there, forever purified, in thy presence to abide; come, with all thine angels, come, raise the glorious harvest home.

Call to Worship From UMC Disciple Ministries

Pastor: Come to worship Jesus Christ, Alpha and Omega, the one who is, who was, and is to come

People: We come to worship the one who rules justly.

Pastor: Come to worship Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, The firstborn of the dead, The ruler of the kings of the earth!

People: Bread of Heaven, God with us.

Pastor: Good Shepherd, True Vine!

People: Eternal Word, Great I AM.

Pastor: Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace.

All: We come to worship Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords! To him be glory and dominion forever and ever! Amen.

Unison Prayer:

**Shepherd of Israel, hear our prayer
as your Son heard the plea
of the criminal crucified with him.**

**Gather into Christ's holy reign
the broken, the sorrowing, and the sinner,
that all may know wholeness, joy, and forgiveness.
Amen.**

OT Reading: 2 Samuel 23: 1-7

NT Reading: Revelation 1: 4b-8

***Hymn: Rejoice, the Lord is King**

UMH No. 715

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore; mortals, give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; rejoice; again I say, rejoice.
2. Jesus the Savior reigns, the God of truth and love; when he had purged our stains, he took his seat above. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; rejoice; again I say, rejoice.
3. His kingdom cannot fail; he rules o'er earth and heaven; the keys of earth and hell are to our Jesus given. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; rejoice; again I say, rejoice.
4. Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge shall come, and take his servants up to their eternal home. We soon shall hear th'archangel's voice; the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

Gospel Reading: John 18: 33-37

Pastor: The word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God!

Choral Anthem

Message: Christ the King

All of our readings for today were pretty interesting. It is tempting to delve into 2nd Samuel, especially towards the end with the thorns and fire.

Suffice it to say, sin can be like a vicious vine that you won't want to touch with your bare hands.

However, if this reading feels out of place, there is a reason why! You'll notice that we aren't following a narrative anymore in the Old Testament, we are now picking selective readings for the season we're in. Gone are the days of following David's story, and we just got the cliffnotes version of Hannah from Trish last week.

This is the last Sunday of 'ordinary time' before we hit advent. I'm having trouble believing that advent is right around the corner, I do not feel as prepared as I was last year.

Good thing advent is a season of waiting! Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation: the worship team and I had fun planning on Tuesday night.

But this is the last Sunday before advent.

A bit of anticipation in itself!

Shouldn't it have a name? Yes: Christ the King Sunday. This is the last Sunday in a church year, as well! I think we're entering year C, if that means anything to you.

You'll notice that our reading from the gospel was not following our usual mark passage either. We're done with that narrative for a while...

Our New Testament reading was not from Hebrews, instead it was from Revelation. Yikes. What a difference!

This is due to it *being* Christ the King Sunday, which is usually celebrated more thoroughly in other church traditions. (It is especially not celebrated in protestant churches.

However, this special Sunday is a relatively recent addition to church yearly cycles. I believe it came about in Catholicism in the 1920s.)

So as I was scanning for information about this day, I realized it is a feast day! With the amount of feast days listed in the less reformed churches... I'd say the Catholic and Episcopal and Lutheran churches like to party.

Actually, recently I attended mass on a Saturday, and found myself in a completely different world. Growing up, I did not attend Roman Catholic Churches very often, but when I did, I was not too surprised at the format.

Church felt churchy.

Now that I'm older and more discerning of religious practices, I felt like I was in a different world. From seeing the blue painted ceiling with stars, to the Fleur-de-Lis painted on the wall, to the stations of the cross and gleaming gold, to the priest's robe as he processed up the aisle after a man carrying a cross on a pole. Bells ring at communion.

Perhaps Christ as King has a clearer meaning to those who are used to celebrating Christ in a more liturgical way. Maybe the more "kingly speech", the more gold one has in a church...

When googling images for Christ the King Sunday, there were a lot of European Jesus paintings wearing large golden crowns and holding scepters. Very Medieval. The image of Christ as King must translate differently into different cultures.

Now, we're at the pinnacle of the church year, the very end before we descend into advent.

And at the pinnacle of the church year is: the king. A ruler. One who sits above all.

What does Christ the King mean to you?

I think our John passage and our Revelation passage are very helpful for deciphering what Christ as **king** means. We in 21st century America are fairly separated from the idea of a king, so the Bible has to give us some insights about what it means.

Sure, we talk about King David pretty often, and a couple other biblical kings. We here might think of medieval imagery when we think of kings, but if we want historical accuracy, we can be assisted by some Ancient Near Eastern history lessons.

We still use the language of "kingdom" very often, as seen in the Lord's prayer. I've heard some churches move to the language of "kin-dom" instead.

Though we fought for independence from a King, we have presidents and governors as those who 'rule' these days, so the idea of a ruler is not completely lost.

However, it seems to me that Christ as king in these passages tends to be more apocalyptic than presidential.

Christ is king means something 'other'. Something that we can't quite understand, but that is pointed to throughout all of scripture. Apocalyptic, or pointing to end times. Escatological, or otherworldly.

Similar to how I as a protestant felt sitting in the Catholic Church, staring at all of these symbols. Christ's coming is because he is King, and it will not be something that we will fully understand.

Pilate tried to wrap his mind around Christ's kingship, but could really only see in political terms. He was a different religion, after all.

While we may say "God is alpha and omega, who Is and who Was and who Is to Come", it doesn't mean that this phrase makes a lot of sense to us now.

While we may sing "though he comes in clouds descending" it doesn't mean that that makes a lot of sense either. The thing that comes descending from the clouds is precipitation.

Even Jesus saying "my kingdom is not from this world" is odd.

I challenge you to describe the world where Christ comes from, and where we will go to.

We might look up as our best effort.

What really is the kingdom that Christ is a part of?

I think this is why apocalyptic literature is so important, because it tries to describe something that is so *other* than what we are used to. These words help us glimpse something that is of a different world.

One that we are ultimately hopeful for.

Just as kings can be gracious and generous, they are strict and disciplined.

Though Jesus has so many titles, we are to be reminded that Christ is God, and head of our lives.

Christ as King means we are all part of a Kingdom. A Kin-dom. Here and now, but also into the future.

And the New Testament is FULL of advice for how to live into the Kingdom that is here and now, but also into the future. Even if it doesn't make a lot of earthly sense. Yet we still know our place.

I challenge you again to think about the Kingdom of God, and what it asks us to be like. How do you participate? It's more than just paying taxes to the King.

Do we live like we're part of a kingdom? We definitely live in an earthly society, but what about that heavenly one?

I think of the saying to "store up treasures in heaven." The Kingdom of God is justice and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

As we recognize Christ as our head, our King, not of this world but of the next. And as we wrestle with all that means for us, take heart that there is instruction and advice in our Bible. We have faithful scribes and apostles, dwellers in the kingdom, who want to help us out.

May we be thankful for the work of those who have gone before, and ever so thankful on this feast day for the one who laid down his life so we may be rejoined to our creator.

Offering and Doxology

UMH No. 94

Pastoral Prayer:

Pastor: In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. For all people in their daily life and work;

People: For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

Pastor: For this community, the nation, and the world;

People: For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

Pastor: For the just and proper use of your creation;

People: For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

Pastor: For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

People: For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

Pastor: For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

People: For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

Pastor: For Bishop Webb, DS Weeden, all bishops and other ministers;

People: For all who serve God in his Church.

Pastor: For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. **silence for personal prayers** Hear us, Lord;

People: For your mercy is great.

Pastor: We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. **silence for personal prayers** We will exalt you, O God our King;

People: And praise your Name for ever and ever.

Pastor: We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. **silence for personal prayers** Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

People: Who put their trust in you.

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and power and the glory forever. Amen

1. O sing a song of Bethlehem, of shepherds watching there, and of the news that came to them from angels in the air. The light that shone on Bethlehem fills all the world today; of Jesus' birth and peace on earth the angels sing always.
2. O sing a song of Nazareth, of sunny days of joy; O sing of fragrant flowers' breath, and of the sinless Boy. For now the flowers of Nazareth in every heart may grow; now spreads the fame of his dear name on all the winds that blow.
3. O sing a song of Galilee, of lake and woods and hill, of him who walked upon the sea and bade the waves be still. For though like waves on Galilee, dark seas of trouble roll, when faith has heard the Master's word, falls peace upon the soul.
4. O sing a song of Calvary, its glory and dismay, of him who hung upon the tree, and took our sins away. For he who died on Calvary is risen from the grave, and Christ, our Lord, by heaven adored, is mighty now to save.

Benediction: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Postlude: Now Thank We All Our God Wilbur Held

Announcements

1. Nov. 21, 4pm: Charge Conference, downstairs
2. Nov. 27, 1:30-2:30pm: Join us as we decorate our Church for the Advent/Christmas season
3. Dec. 4, 9 AM - 1 PM: West Stockholm UMC Annual Holiday Bazaar, as a COVID precaution, masks will be required for everyone.

Birthdays

Richard Clements Nov. 25

Marsha Clements Nov. 30

Worship Participants

Greeters/Ushers:

Nov. 21: Carol Willmert and Trish Lewis

Nov. 28: Tim Virgil and Janet & Larry Howe

Reader:

Weekly Offering:

\$1,840.00: November 14 offering

\$1,700.00: need each week

Church office hours: Monday and Wednesday 9am - 11pm
Pastor Taylor's Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-5pm, Thursdays 10am-2pm.

email: info@potsdamumc.org ♦ Website: www.potsdamumc.org

Pastor Taylor: pastortaylor@potsdamumc.org

Potsdam United Methodist Church, 26 Main Street, Potsdam NY 13676, 315-265-7474